

*William T. "Ron" Roberts, Jr.*  
*Chair*

*Roland M. Toups.*  
*Vice Chair*

*Frances T. Henry*  
*Secretary*

*E. Joseph Savoie*  
*Commissioner of*  
*Higher Education*



**BOARD OF REGENTS**

*P.O. Box 3677*  
*Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3677*  
*Phone (225) 342-4253*  
*FAX (225) 342-9318*

*William "Billy" Blake*  
*Scott O. Brame*  
*Richard E. D'Aquin*  
*Reggie Dupré*  
*Robert W. Levy*  
*William "Bill" Oliver*  
*Virgil Robinson, Jr.*  
*Norbert A. Simmons*  
*William Clifford Smith*  
*Pat A. Strong*  
*Artis Terrell, Jr.*  
*Steven Sumbler*  
*Student Member*

June 6, 2003

Contact: Kevin Hardy

**Savoie Makes Case To Senate Finance Committee For Maintaining  
Higher Education Support**

Commissioner of Higher Education Joe Savoie urged members of the Senate Finance Committee to preserve Louisiana's progress in postsecondary during a presentation on the proposed state budget this morning.

"We are transitioning, but we are not transformed," Savoie said after reviewing the accomplishments of Louisiana's public colleges and universities in recent years. Those highlights include record enrollment, improved graduation and retention rates, decreased enrollment in developmental education, national recognition for Louisiana's teacher education reforms and electronic learning initiatives, and increased research and economic development efforts.

The Senate Finance Committee began hearing testimony on the state budget this week. Last week the House of Representatives passed the appropriations bill, which restored previously proposed cuts to postsecondary education. The current proposed budget includes such items as:

- Pass-through funds to cover state-mandated cost increases in group health insurance, risk management, and civil service merit raises,

- Funding for community and technical college growth and development,

(More)

### **Maintaining Higher Education Support**

#### **ADD ONE**

- Funding for endowed chairs and professorships, and
- Performance and quality pool funds, intended primarily to support the implementation of new admission standards at Louisiana's public, four-year universities.

“Our colleges and universities provide Louisiana’s workforce, stimulate economic development, and strengthen Louisiana’s communities,” Savoie said. “Investments in these critical areas are vital to our state’s future growth. Today our purpose is threefold: to thank the legislature for the past support they have provided, to demonstrate results, and to encourage continued investments in our campuses.”

In addition to Commissioner Savoie’s testimony, committee members heard from the presidents of the LSU, Southern, LCTCS and University of Louisiana systems. The Senate Finance committee is expected to vote on the budget in the next few days and advance the budget to the full Senate for discussion.

The budget must be passed by both houses by the end of the legislative session on June 23.